



Bitterroot National Forest

1801 N. 1st Street, Hamilton, MT 59840 (406) 363-7100

WILDFIRE UPDATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nan Christianson
Public Affairs Officer
(406) 363-7113 office
(406) 531-1130 cell

Bitterroot NF Fire Update And a Reminder...

Despite Fires, there's Plenty of Opportunities to Recreate on the Bitterroot NF

HAMILTON, MT; AUGUST 10, 2007 AM. The air is a bit clearer and the temperatures a bit cooler, but fire season is a long way from being over.

New Starts

A thunderstorm passed across the valley on Thursday evening, and firefighting efforts on one new start are already in progress. Located on the north facing wall of Canyon Creek, the column of smoke from the ¼ acre fire is very visible from Hamilton. Two helicopters are doing bucket work and the fire will be staffed with rappellers. Information about new starts on the Bitterroot can be obtained online from the Bitterroot National Forest's dispatchers' weblog: visit <http://63.196.254.151/WildWeb/WCMT-BRC.htm> then follow link to "open incidents".

Two Project Fires

- The Rombo fire, at 3300 acres, is being managed by a Type II team based near the West Fork Ranger District. Information regarding that fire is provided by the Rombo Fire Information Team, which you can reach by calling 406-821-0082.
- The Tin Cup fire, at 580 acres, is managed by a second Type II team based at the Darby School. You can reach the information officers for that fire at 821-4247.

Some web-based resources are also available. The national website at www.inciweb.org seems to be difficult to access due to demand. We are posting daily updates on the Forest's website at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/.

Neighboring Forests' Fires

- The Bridge Fire, located on the Clearwater NF, is approaching 20,000 acres. It is 3 – 4 miles west of and across the ID-MT divide from the Bear Creek-Mill Creek area. Interior areas of the fire contain unburned stands continue to torch, creating the large smoke plume that is visible from the Bitterroot Valley. More information is available at www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater or by calling 208-942-3113.
- The Wyman 2 Fire, located on the Lolo National Forest east of Stevensville, is threatening to burn across the Sapphire Mountain divide onto the Bitterroot side of the mountains. In order to protect the public and provide for firefighter safety, the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests have closed Trail 313 from Skalkaho Pass to Sawmill Saddle, and all lands east of the trail and in the vicinity of the fire. If you need more detailed information about this trail and area closure call the Bitterroot NF office at 363-7176 or the Stevensville Ranger District office at 777-5461.
 - Wildland Fire Use Fires: Fifteen wildland fire use fires continue to be managed for resource benefits in the Frank Church-River of No Return, Selway-Bitterroot and Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness areas. Total acres involved in these fires totals approximately 5000, and the individual fires range in size from over 3000 to less than 1/10 of an acre. Additional information about these fires is available from the West Fork Ranger District at 821-3269.
- In addition to smoke from nearby fires, much larger fires in central and southern Idaho continue to contribute significant smoke to the Bitterroot Valley.

And Despite Fires, there's PLENTY of Recreation Opportunities on this Forest!

With summer winding down, and only a few weeks left before the beginning of school, don't let the fires keep you away from getting out and enjoying the Bitterroot NF. Campgrounds and the majority of trails and roads remain open, there are lakes to be hiked to, streams to be fished in, wildlife to be

viewed and mountains to be climbed. Just be careful with fire and the added traffic on Forest roads in the vicinity of wildfires! Call any one of our Forest offices' for information about fire-related closures or activity.

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